GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4940
ANSWERED ON:20.12.2000
LIBERALISATION OF VISA CONDITIONS BY SWITZERLAND
GADDE RAMAMOHAN

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any request has been made to Switzerland to liberalise its visa conditions for Indians temporarily engaged in various jobs in that country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken to enhance economic co-operation with Switzerland?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA)

(a) & (b) The issue of difficulties being faced by Indian businessmen and professionals in obtaining visas to Switzerland has been raised with the Switzerland through official channels. The response of the Swiss side has been encouraging. A review of the visa regime is underway.

(c) India and Switzerland have been working towards enhancing bilateral economic co-operation. The discussions during the visit of Mr. Pascal Couchepin, Swiss Minister of Economy to India on 15-29 February 2000, during the visit of EAM to Berne in September 2000 and during the 7th meeting of the Indo-Swiss Joint Commission in November 2000 have helped the two sides to focus on this aspect of the relationship. The exchange of the Instruments of Ratification of the Bilateral Investment Protection Agreement and the signature of the Protocol Amending the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement in February 2000 have provided a positive framework for the enhancement of economic co-operation between India and Switzerland.